

Creating a Tie Dye Top Using BodyShop and Paint Shop Pro

What we will be learning

This tutorial will teach you the basics of clothing creation with BodyShop and how to make a spiffy tie dye top from scratch. You'll also be learning how to use the exported alpha and texture layers from BodyShop to help you perfect your designs.



What you need and what you need to know

BodyShop, obviously. Use the version that came with the most recently published expansion pack you have (if any). We will be making the texture using Paint Shop Pro. Any version from version 7 upwards will do for this tutorial (or you can download a free trial of version XI from the Corel website). The main instructions are given using Paint Shop Pro Photo XI, but where the methods are different for version 7, **these will be highlighted in red**. If you own a different image editing application, you may be able to adapt the method to suit your program if you're proficient enough with it.

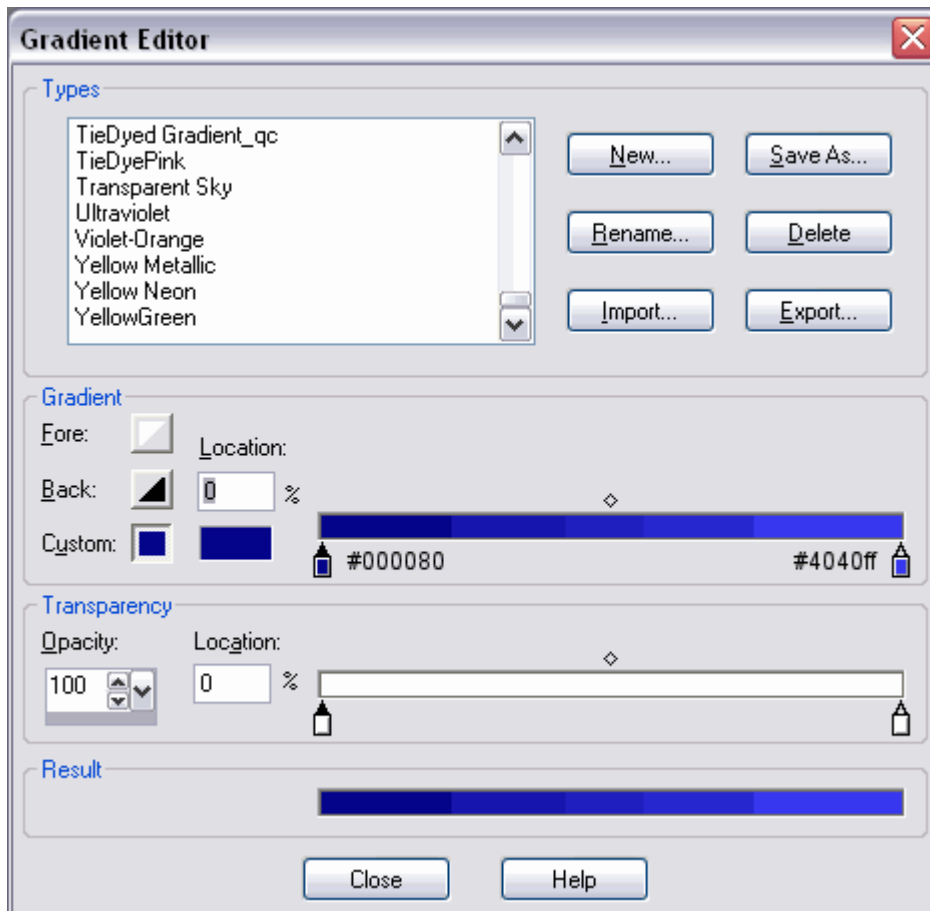
I'm assuming you have no knowledge of BodyShop for this tutorial, but you do need to have at least a basic working knowledge of PSP. If you don't, now is a good time to read the manual ;)

Creating the tie dye texture

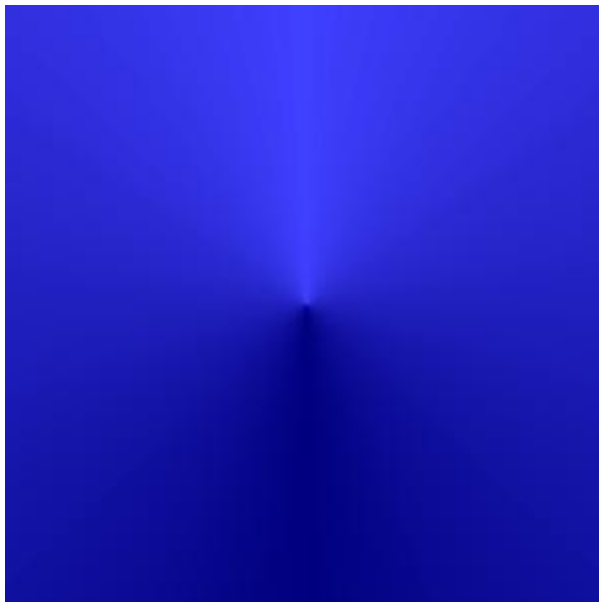
Load up BodyShop. This usually takes an age, even longer if you have a lot of custom content, so leave this to start up in the background and in the meantime, let's load Paint Shop Pro.

Create a new file, dimensions 300 x 300 pixels, raster, background colour transparent. Save the file as TieDyeBlue.pspimage (or **TieDyeBlue.psp**) in any convenient location. Be sure to save this file frequently.

Select the flood fill tool and change the mode to gradient. Now create a new gradient with the following settings:

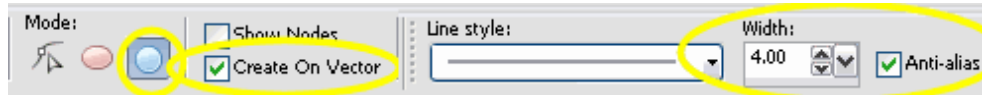


And save it as TieDyeBlue. Set the style to radial, angle to 0 and repeats to 1. Now flood fill the canvas at 200 opacity and you'll get this:



We'll now add the shapes which will form the base of the tie-dye pattern. For simplicity we will use circles, but you could choose any shape you like, or simply straight lines.

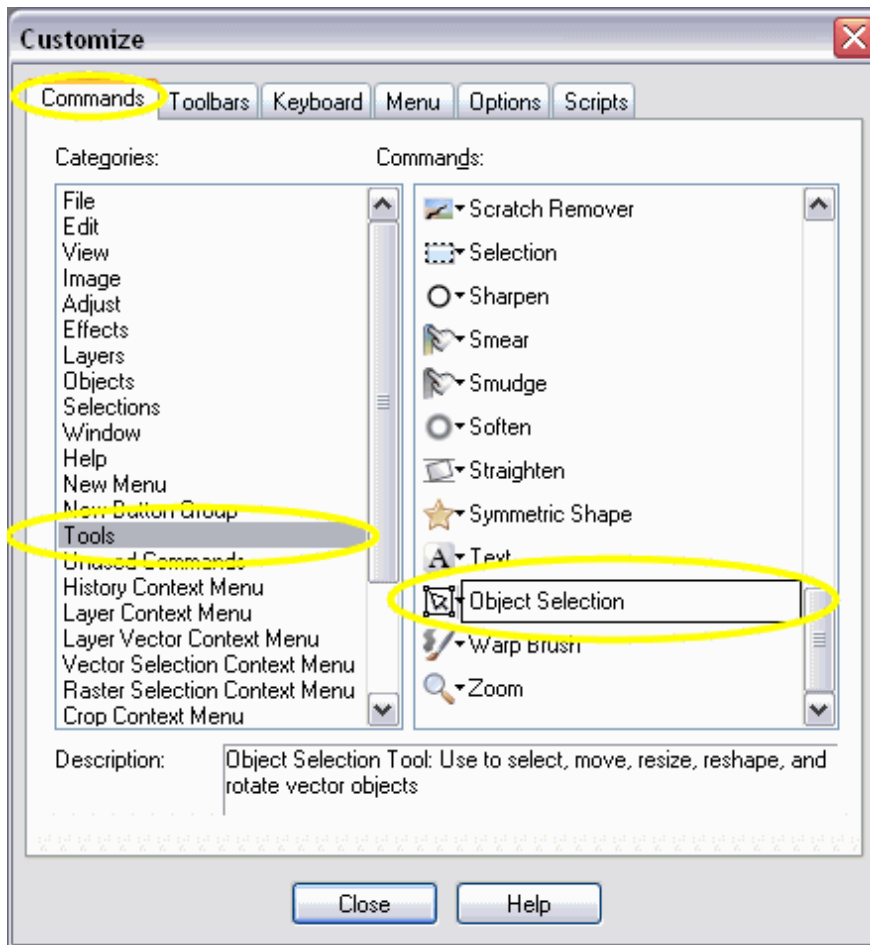
Select the ellipse tool (for version 7 select the preset shapes tool and then ellipse). Check the Create as Vector box, and select the circle. set the line/stroke width to 4, the stroke colour to solid white and the fill colour to null. If using version 7, hold down Shift while drawing to create perfect circles.



Now draw 4 circles on the canvas, each bigger than the previous. Your canvas should now look similar to this:



We will now use the vector select tool (shortcut key O) to select all 4 circles. This tool does not show up by default in later versions of PSP. You have to manually add it to the tool palette by right-clicking on the tool palette, selecting Customise... > Commands > Tools and dragging the Object Selection tool onto your tool palette (see screenshot).



Using this tool, drag a marquee over all the circles to select them. Then centre them with the centre button on the tool options palette on the canvas to get this.



On the Layers palette, right-click on your vector layer and select Merge > Merge All (Flatten).

Now we have a single raster layer. We will now create the tie-dye effect. Select the Lighten/Darken tool (shortcut key L). Use the following settings (make sure thickness is set to 100):

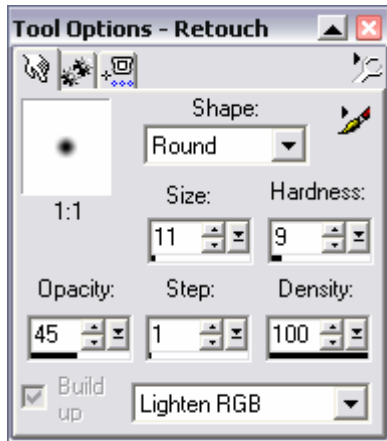


Version 7:

Select the retouch tool



I had to use slightly different settings to get the same effect on version 7, as follows:



Now trace over the white circles with a zigzag motion to create the tie dye effect. This will probably be easier with a graphics tablet, but as you can see a decent effect can be obtained with an optical mouse (or a well-cleaned ball mouse!). It's a good idea to zoom in quite close while applying this effect as it can be a bit tricky getting it right.



It's already beginning to resemble tie-dyed fabric. Carry on until you have done all the circles. Feel free to tweak the tool settings until you find one that gives you the best effect. Your image should look something like this:



Let's make the effect a bit more realistic by applying a slight blur. Go to Effects > Blur > Gaussian Blur and set the radius to a value between 1.00 and 2.00. Here I've used 1.20:



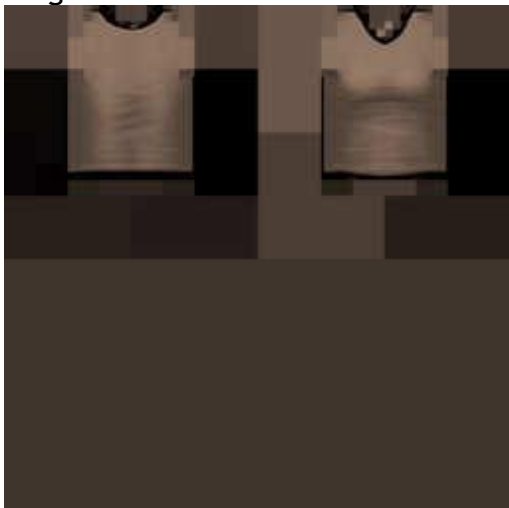
Now let's return to BodyShop and try out the texture.

Switch back to the BodyShop window. Click Create Parts, Start New Project, Create Clothing. Adult Female clothes are selected by default. Click on the Everyday icon that appears, then Tops. Scroll through the list towards the end until you reach the sleeveless tops and select one. We'll use the brown one shown here. Then click on the 'Export Selected Textures' button.



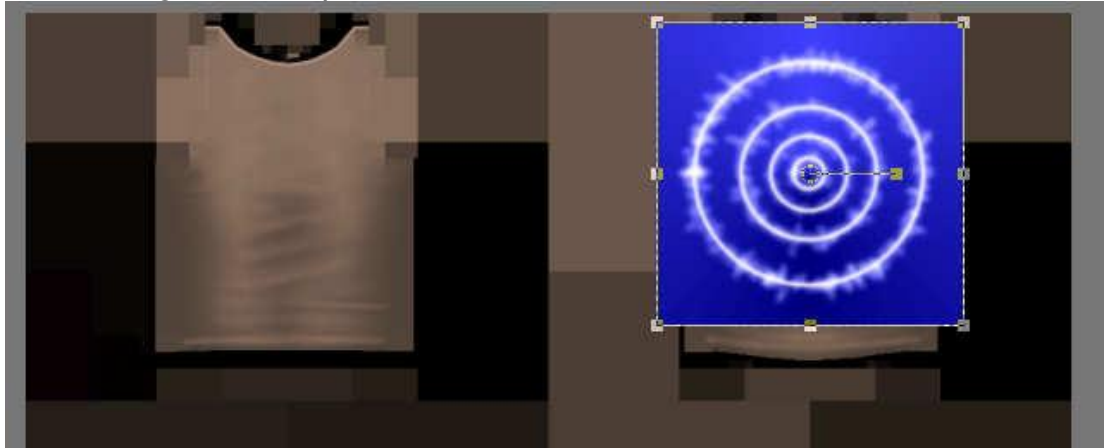
You'll be prompted to enter a name for the project. Call it TieDyeTop and click the accept button. **Don't click anything else yet!**

Switch back to Paint Shop Pro. Go to File > Open... and navigate to My Documents > EA Games > The Sims 2 > Projects > TieDyeTop. There will be 4 files in there. We want this one: top-stdMatBaseTextureName.bmp. Your image will look like this.



Now switch back to the window containing your tie dye texture. Copy it, then back to the clothing texture and Paste As New Layer (Ctrl + L).

Use the Pick Tool (K) (the deformation tool on version 7) to move it until it is over the right hand top. Like this:



Save the file (Ctrl+S). You'll be warned that the saved file will be a flattened image. Click Yes.

Note: If you close and re-load this file, all your layers will be lost. If your PC is prone to crashing, I would advise you to frequently use File > Save Copy As... to save a backup of the file in .pspimage (or .psp) format.

Now go back to BodyShop and press the refresh button (the circular arrow). You can see your top start to take shape. It still needs a fair bit of work though. Let's go back to Paint Shop Pro. Using the Pick tool again, take hold of the bottom-right handle on the marquee and drag it down just enough until the tie dye texture covers the entire right hand top, then save and refresh your preview in BodyShop.



That's better!

Using the alpha layer as a mask

We can make use of the alpha image file exported by BodyShop to help us align the clothing texture properly. Sometimes this is necessary so you to know where your texture should go. For instance, if you export a texture from a downloaded mesh's base texture, like this:

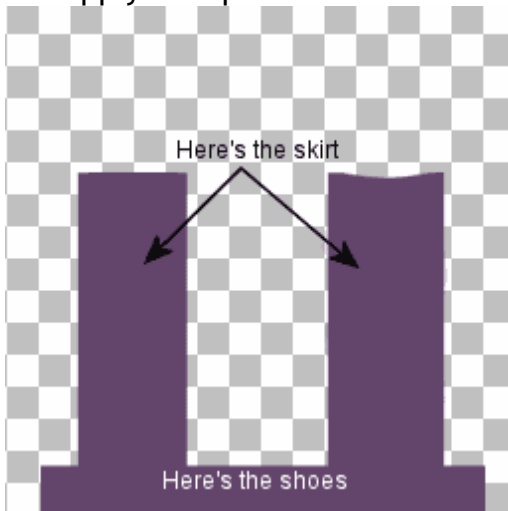


Then you may end up with a canvas that looks like this:



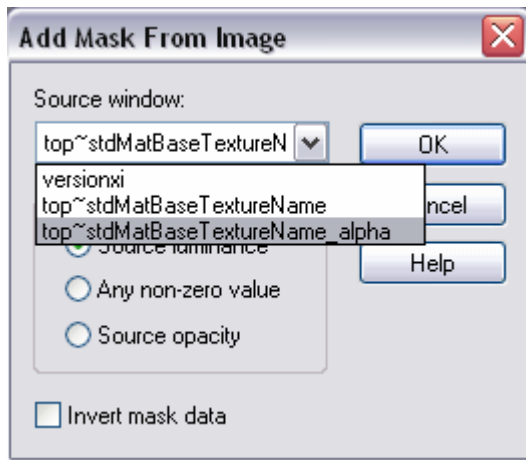
Not very helpful!

But apply its alpha channel as a mask... and suddenly all becomes clear!

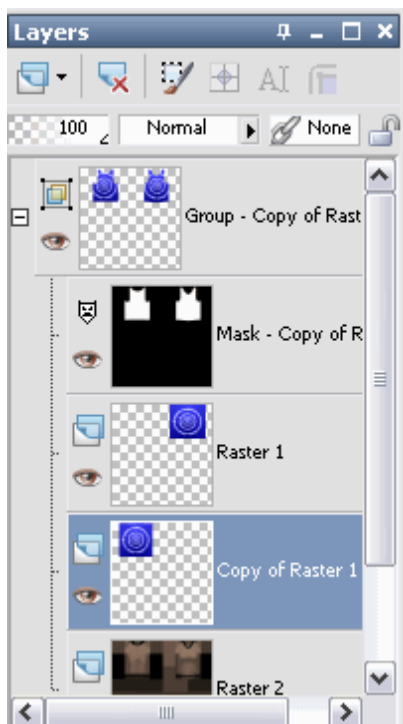


Right, back to our top. Navigate back to the TieDyeTop folder again and

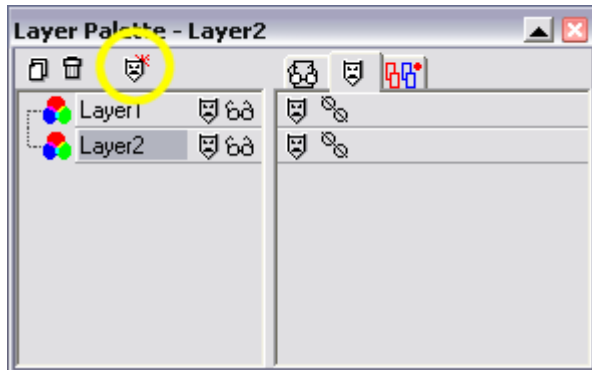
open the file named top~stdMatBaseTextureName_alpha.bmp in PSP. (Version 7 users, the method is slightly different, see the next page.) Switch back to the top's texture image and go to Layers > New Mask Layer > From Image... then use the settings shown below:



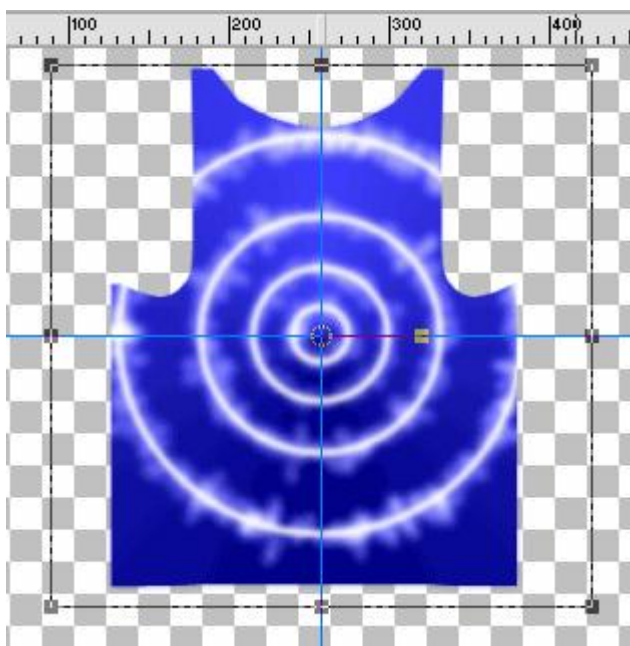
This will create a mask over the current layer. Now right-click on the background layer and select Promote Background Layer (or Promote to Layer). Now drag all the layers into the same group as the mask, so your layer palette will look like the one shown below. Make sure the mask layer is at the top of the list.



Version 7: It is not possible to group raster layers in version 7. The method here is Masks > New > From Image... and select the alpha layer as above. Then you will have to apply this mask to each individual layer by selecting each remaining layer in turn, then clicking on the Create Mask button for each on the Layer Palette, here:



If the centre of the circles on the top aren't in line with the centre of the top, use the Pick Tool again to align the texture in the middle. The best way to do this is to use guides, as below, then use the centre marker of the Pick marquee to align the texture properly.



Now we need to apply the same texture to the back of the top. First save and preview your top to make sure you are happy with the position of the pattern. Now, on the layers palette, right-click the tie dye layer and select Duplicate. It's easy to make sure the textures' positions match. Just go to Image > Mirror and the textures for the front and back of the top should be aligned.

Once you're happy with the position of your textures, save the image and preview again in BodyShop.



Tada!

Now we can add noise to the texture to make it look like worn cotton. Merge all the layers by right-clicking on any in the layer palette and selecting Merge > Merge All (Flatten).

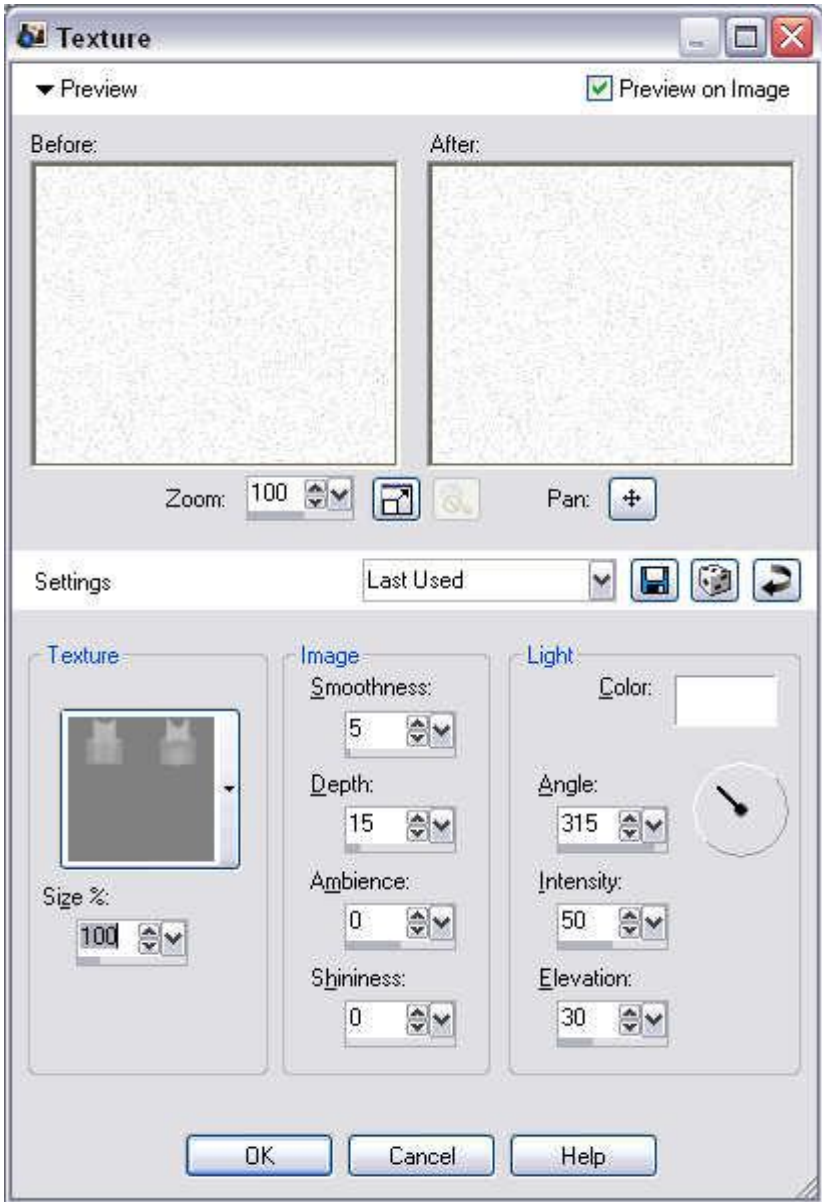
Go to Effects > Add/Remove Noise > Add Noise... Select Gaussian, Monochrome and set the level to about 20% (experiment with the level to find one you like), then apply. (In version 7, go to Effects > Noise > Add... and select Uniform and 20%.)

Using the Exported Bumpmap Image to Create an Illusion of Relief

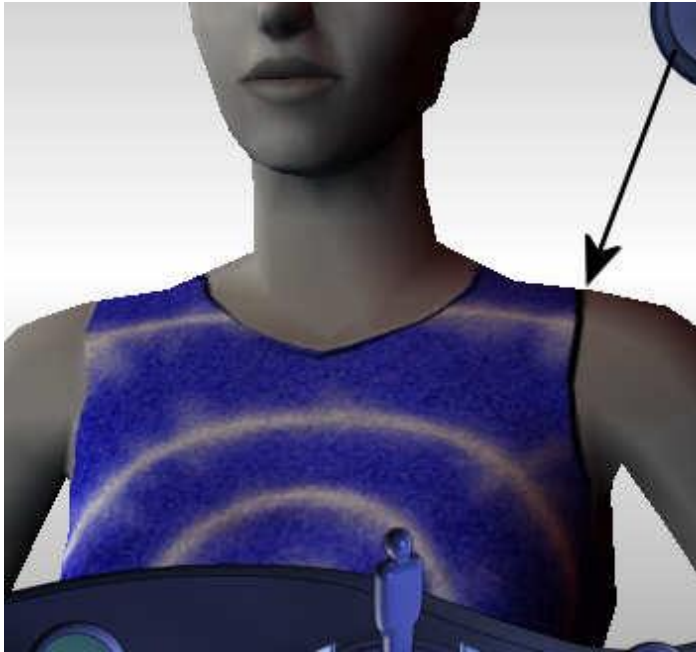
Some clothing exports a 3rd texture image (the bumpmap - we will discuss this later) which can be used to give the illusion of relief (3D) to your clothing. In this case the image is called top~stdMatNormalMapTextureName.bmp. We can use this with Paint Shop Pro's Texture Effect to remove the 'flatness' of the texture.

Copy this file to My Documents > My PSP Files > Textures (version 7 users: copy this to the Textures directory in the location you installed PSP) and give it a meaningful name (e.g. SleevelessTopF).

First make a duplicate of the layer. Now on the topmost (i.e. the duplicated) layer, go to Effects > Texture Effects > Texture and in the dialogue select SleevelessTopF (or whatever you named it) with the following settings:



Save your file. Preview in BodyShop.



I've zoomed in here by pressing F3. As you can see the texture has created a creasing effect, which makes the fabric look more realistic, but also dark edges which we don't want. This is why we did this effect on a duplicate layer! Go back to PSP and select the Eraser Tool (X). On the duplicated layer again, erase over all the dark edges. Save and preview again:



Feel free to undo and redo the Texture Effect with different settings if you're unhappy with the settings used above.

The Bumpmap

With more advanced graphics cards, the bumpmap texture adds the 3D effect for you. Since we have done this manually we don't want the bumpmap adding even more depth to our texture if we have a graphics card capable of rendering it (if your card doesn't have Pixel Shader it will not show up on your texture anyway). Open the bumpmap file again (top~stdMatNormalMapTextureName.bmp) in your TieDyeTop folder. Now flood fill the entire canvas with the RGB colour #808080 (or 128 128 128). Save this file.

(More on bumpmaps here: <http://www.modthesims2.com/showthread.php?t=92444>)

If you're happy with the way your top looks, make a final save and check out your masterpiece in BodyShop! Now add a tool tip (you can just put their name in here so anyone whom you share your creation with knows who to credit) and click on Import to Game. You're done!

Sharing your creations

Now that you've created your spiffy top, you might want to share it with others. Do not share the package file in the TieDyeTop folder; this will not work. You need to navigate to your SavedSims folder in My Documents > EA Games > The Sims 2. The file name will be a random hexadecimal number followed by `_yourprojectname.package` (see below).

Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
e796e162_b1ad56dd.package	162 KB	PACKAGE File	07/05/2007 21:33
e796e162_ba7b298a.package	162 KB	PACKAGE File	07/05/2007 21:18
5fdbd77b_TieDyeSkirtRain.package	133 KB	PACKAGE File	07/05/2007 21:08
5f9edadd_TieDyeSkirt.package	536 KB	PACKAGE File	06/05/2007 22:45
5f49fe41_TieDyeLinesM.package	660 KB	PACKAGE File	06/05/2007 22:41
5f8d7eb5_TieDyeTop.package	541 KB	PACKAGE File	06/05/2007 22:28
5f6e7c83_TieDye2.package	253 KB	PACKAGE File	04/05/2007 21:06
5f268f67_TieDyePink.package	213 KB	PACKAGE File	03/05/2007 20:58

This is the file that you need to use when sharing or uploading your creation.

Wahey! All Done!

There! You did it! Now you've mastered the tie dye technique, have a go making more zany creations with different shapes and colours. How about hot pink with stars, violet with hearts or lime green with wavy lines? Or even a crazy combination of all three?

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